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## CRITICAL NOTES ON THE TEXT OF JOB

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As elsewhere in the Old Testament, so in the Book of Job our chief control over the Hebrew text is the early Greek version. Unfortunately the use of the Greek version is in this book beset by peculiar difficulty, for in the first place large parts of the Hebrew text were not rendered by it, and in the second, since our version is often paraphrastic and in general more idiomatic than that of some other books of the Old Testament, there is a danger of treating differences from the Hebrew text as real which are merely apparent<sup>1</sup> and due to the translator's regard for Greek idiom. As a set-off against this, another method of control may be applied with somewhat less uncertainty than elsewhere. Job is by far the longest poem in the Old Testament, and it is possible to conjecture with correspondingly more probability the rhythmical intentions of the writer than in short psalms or brief prophetic poems. There can be no question that the dominant rhythm of Job is that of the balanced distich, each line of which contains three stresses. Even in Job there are, I believe, clear examples of other rhythms, but these are relatively few, and any departures from the 3:3 rhythm in the existing text, and still more in proposed emendations, call for a rigorous examination. There are, again, examples of tristichs, and though these also are relatively few there seem to be a sufficient number free from any suspicion independent of rhythm for it to be unwise to deny that some may be due to the intention of the writer. The attempt to impose on the poem a rigid system of quatrains I regard as unsuccessful and to have been attended with some very unfortunate results.

In the following notes I illustrate certain applications of the two methods of control just mentioned by reference to passages in which, in the forthcoming commentary, I have suggested new

<sup>1</sup> A number of such unreal variants attributed to the Greek text in the notes in Kittel's Bible were noted by Driver in notes he had prepared for the *International Critical Commentary* on Job, which is now in press and will appear soon.

emendations or modifications of earlier ones, taking this opportunity to discuss certain points more fully than has been possible in the commentary.

## JOB 7:4

אם שכבתי ואמרתִי בַחֲאִקוֹם  
וּמִדֹּד עֵרֶב וּשְׁבַעֲתִי נִדְדִים עַדִּי נֶשֶׁךְ

ἐὰν κοιμηθῶ, λέγω πότε ἡμέρα;

ὥς δ' ἂν ἀναστῶ, πάλιν πότε ἑσπέρα;

πλήρης δὲ γίνομαι ὁδυνῶν ἀπὸ ἑσπέρας ἕως πρωί.

When I lie down, I say,

When shall I arise? But the night is long:

And I am full of tossings to and fro until the dawning of the day [R.V.].

The Revised Version, by dividing into three lines instead of into two (the first ending at "arise"), exaggerates the imperfection of the parallelism that in some measure certainly marks the Hebrew text. G's first two lines are no doubt admirable parallels, but the third follows awkwardly, reverting to the night experience of the first line instead of following up the day experience of the second line; the ἀπὸ ἑσπέρας of the third line is probably an addition of the translators to unite the third line a little better with the second. It is possible that most of the remaining apparent variations of G do not represent real differences in H. Clearly down to πότε in the first line, and from ἑσπέρα in the second line, G (apart from ἀπὸ ἑσπέρας) has the same text as H. What Hebrew text is represented by the intervening words in G? Beer (*Der Text des Buches Hiob*) followed by Duhm replies: יום ואם קמתי בַחֲאִקוֹם. This is a fair conjectural retranslation of G, though it fails to account for πάλιν and assumes that G renders the אם (ואם) of the hypothetically exactly similar phrases אם שכבתי and ואם קמתי differently. I suggest that it is equally possible, and more probable, that the text of G differed from H only in having ומִדֹּד instead of ומִדֹּד; having a text which appeared to mean: If I lie down, I say, "When (will it be) . . . , " I arise, and (or, again), "When will it be evening?"; possibly too, having Deut. 28:67 in mind, the translator supplied what appeared to him the obviously missing word "day."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> With ὥς δ' ἂν ἀναστῶ=אִקוֹם (treated as virtually hypothetical) cf. ὅταν ἀναστῶ=אִקוֹמָה (19:18); ἐὰν ὑπερείσῃ=יִשְׁעָךְ (8:15); ἐὰν κληίσῃ=יִסְגֵּר (12:14). With πάλιν=בָּ, cf. πάλιν δὲ=בָּ (33:19).

In this passage, then, G seems to me an unsafe starting-point for the reading proposed by Beer and for the further conjectures by means of which Duhm reconstructs, out of the two overlong lines of H, a quatrain of three stressed lines, as follows:

אם שכבתי ואמרת  
מתי ים ואקם  
ואם קמתי מתי ערב  
ושבעתי נדרים עדי נשק

If I lie down, I say,  
When (will it be) day, that I may arise?  
And if I arise (I say), When (will it be) even?  
And I am sated with tossings to the dawn.

The first of these lines is two- rather than three-stressed; the others may be read as examples of the dominant rhythm of the book. But the parallelism is poor; in fact, the lines of the distichs are not parallels, and the parallel terms have drifted into odd lines. Moreover, the first line gives the impression of being defective, the second, on the contrary, of being stuffed out by the addition of the superfluous **ואקם**, and the conjectural element, as already remarked, is very extensive; thus, although Duhm improves on the impossible rhythm of H—a four-stressed line followed by a five-stressed line—and also eliminates the strange meanings which H requires to be placed on **מדר** and **ערב** (which elsewhere, true to its etymology [time of sun-], *setting is evening*, not *night*), there is clearly room for a fresh suggestion.

It is possible to eliminate the questionable meanings of **מדר** and **ערב** and to restore regularity of rhythm—though not, it is true, the 3:3 rhythm dominant in the book, but 4:4, which occasionally appears in it—and an admirable parallelism by means of the minimum of conjecture: Read **וּמְדִי**<sup>1</sup> for **וּמְדִר** and render

When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise?  
And as often as evening (comes), I am sated with tossings till (morning-) twilight.

The original text **וּמְדִי** by the faulty transcription of one letter became **וּמְדִר** in H, and by the faulty transcription of another, **וּמְדִי** in G.

<sup>1</sup> The particle and noun (**וּמְדִי-ערב**) may easily be taken as a single stress; not so the verb and noun of H.

## JOB 17:1, 11

Elsewhere than in the Book of Job, 2:2:2 is by no means an infrequent variation of 3:3.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, in Job even apparent examples of 2:2:2 are very few, and examples certainly going back to the original text are perhaps not to be found.<sup>2</sup> Two apparent examples occur in chapter 17; another is discussed below (24:20). Verse 1 reads:

רוחי חבלה ימי נזעכו קברים לי

*ὀλέκομαι πνεύματι φερόμενος, δέομαι δὲ ταφῆς καὶ οὐ τυγχάνω*

In addition to the unusual rhythm, נזעכו (the verb is elsewhere always רעך) and perhaps the plural קברים are suspicious features. While H is clearly 2:2:2, G rather suggests an original with the rhythm 3:3:3. Unfortunately, it is impossible completely to reconstruct the Hebrew original of G: *ταφῆς* suggests that the translator read the singular קבר, and that the remainder of the line (ימלי) seemed to him to be ואין or ואיננו, which he rendered by *καὶ οὐ τυγχάνω*, as he rendered ואיננו by *καὶ οὐ τυγχάνουσιν* in 3:21. At the beginning of the verse, *πνεύματι* clearly corresponds to רוחי of H, but the remainder חבלה ימי נזעכו may have been read very differently; the attempt to explain *φερόμενος δέομαι δέ= נזע בי* (Duhm) is very questionable; for *φέρειν* never elsewhere = נזע, and the rendering of the particle בי in the Pentateuch by *δέομαι* followed by a vocative is very poor proof that a translator here would take it as equivalent to a verb with an object. More probably *δέομαι δέ* corresponds to the whole of what the translator read for נזעכו, and *ὀλέκομαι φερόμενος* to his reading in lieu of ימי חבלה; but what the original text of this passage was so far remains uncertain.

Again in 17:11 while H is clearly 2:2:2, G suggests 3:3:

ימי עברו זמתי נתקר מורשי לבבי

*αἱ ἡμέραι μου παρήλθον ἐν βρόμῳ*

*ἐρράγη δὲ τὰ ἄρθρα τῆς καρδίας μου*

<sup>1</sup> See G. B. Gray, *Forms of Hebrew Poetry* (London, 1915), p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> A good example would be found in 9:21, if the text could be trusted; but obviously תם אני may be due to erroneous repetition from 9:20.

Three considerations combine to show that זמתי in H is wrong: (1) a noun at this point can only be the subject of נתקר, and this creates the rhythm 2:2:2; but (2) there is no reason for the placing of the subject of נתקר in the emphatic position at the beginning of the sentence; (3) elsewhere זמה always has a bad sense. Clearly then G is so far right that זמתי is a corruption of some complement to עברו—perhaps למוות, proposed by Driver, in preference to Budde's למותי; in the second line מורשי may be an error for מיתרי (= ἄρθρα) as Wright suggests. On the whole Duhm's reconstruction מתקרה צמיתו for נתקר זמתי, and מארשי for מורשי keeps less close to the existing textual evidence.

## JOB 17:14

לשחת קראתי אבי אתה  
אמי ואחתי לרמה

θάνατον ἐπεκαλεσάμην πατέρα μου εἶναι  
μητέρα δέ μου καὶ ἀδελφὴν σαπῖαν

Bickell and Budde delete אתה אבי, taking אמי into the first line. Neither H nor the emended text gives the normal rhythm of Job: the former is 4:3, a rare rhythm<sup>1</sup> of which some apparent (see next note), and perhaps a few actual, examples are to be found in Job; the latter 3:2, a frequent rhythm elsewhere, but in Job, though not unparalleled, quite infrequent. More probably אתה alone should be omitted, and the normal rhythm 3:3 thus restored. In favor of this, it is true, G cannot be safely cited; for εἶναι, which corresponds to nothing else in H, may be an equivalent of אתה; but the addition of אתה may be explained as due to a reminiscence of Jer. 2:27. Budde's objection that שחת being feminine could not be addressed as "father" is invalid; for שאול, commonly feminine, of which שחת is a synonym, is construed with a masculine adjective in 26:6; and Jeremiah, who at one time personifies אבן (feminine) as a female (2:27), at another time (3:9) makes it the male object of Judah's adulterous affection.

<sup>1</sup> See *Forms of Hebrew Poetry*, pp. 172 ff.

## JOB 18:2

עֲדֵאנָה תְּשִׁימוֹן קִנְצִי לְמִלּוֹ  
תְּבִינּוּ וְאַחֵר נִדְבֵר

*μέχρι τίνος οὐ παύσῃ;  
ἐπίσχες, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ λαλήσωμεν*

As in 17:14, so here in H, the rhythm is 4:3; additional suspicious features of H are the poor parallelism, the use of the second person plural in an address to Job, and the strange "קִנְצִי". It is possible that in the first line G is merely a paraphrase of the existing text, the translator having given to קִנְצִי the sense of קָץ, and having corrected the plural pronoun as at least apparently unsuitable to the singular; on the other hand the second line, though it presupposes something very different from תְּבִינּוּ, has no appearance of paraphrase, and even in the first line the words μέχρι τίνος οὐ do not suggest paraphrase, but look like a literal rendering of the very idiomatic Hebrew עַד אָנָּה לֹא, "when at last?" "will you ever?"; but if so, the translator had something much shorter than, and very different from, the remainder of the first line in H, possibly תָּדַם. I suggest, therefore, as the original G, and also as very near to, if not identical with, the original text,

עַד אָנָּה אַתָּה לֹא תִדָּם  
הֲדָל וְאַנְחֵנוּ נִדְבֵר

When at last wilt thou cease (talking)?  
Leave off (now), that we may (begin to) speak.

This is a perfect 3:3 distich. For the אַתָּה unexpressed in G compare the rendering of the similar locution in Zech. 1:12,

עַד מָתִי אַתָּה לֹא תִרְחַם  
*ἕως τίνος οὐ μὴ ἐλεήσῃς*

## JOB 19:14, 15

הֲדָלוּ קִרְוֵי 14  
מִיָּדַעִי שִׁכְחוּנִי  
גִּרִי בֵּיתִי וְאַמְהָתִי לֹדֶר תַּחֲשִׁבֵנִי 15  
נִכְרִי הָיִיתִי בְּעֵינֵיהֶם

In verse 14 the rhythm is 2:2—very rare in Job, though 10:6 seems to be a secure example. Verse 15 is unrhythmical and not to be defended by reference to 7:4 (see above), but simply to be pronounced impossible, as is the second line there. Since Kennicott, many have restored parallelism and normal rhythm by simply transferring גִּרֵי בֵיתִי to verse 14. This, however, separates the closely connected אֲמֵהֶתִי לֹזֶר and גִּרֵי בֵיתִי; moreover תַּחֲשַׁבְנִי, with the subject prefixed and the *waw*, looks more like the second line of a distich. I suggest transposing נִכְרֵי הָיִיתִי בְּעֵינֵיהֶם. Render:

My kinsfolk and my familiar friends have failed,  
A foreigner am I become in their eyes;  
They that obtained guest-right in my house have forgotten me,  
And my maids count me as an alien.

## JOB 24:20a

יִשְׁכַּחְהוּ רַחֵם מִתְקוֹ רֵמָה עוֹד לֹא יִזְכֹּר

This is another apparent example of 2:2:2, which as noticed above (on 17:1:11) is very questionable in Job. Suspicious also is מִתְקוֹ (for מִתְקָחוּ). Beer and others have suggested רֵחַב מִקְמוֹ for רֵחַב מִתְקוֹ. This restores the rhythm 3:3, but Driver objects that in usage רֵחַ means (physical) “loftiness” and is questionable in the sense which the emended text would require. A very slight additional emendation avoids this objection, secures the right rhythm and a better parallelism. Read רֵמָה for רֵחַב, and render:

The square of his (native) place forgetteth him  
And his name is remembered no more.

## JOB 32:14

וְלֹא עָרַךְ אֵלַי מִלִּין  
וּבִאֲמֵרֵיכֶם לֹא אֲשִׁיבֵנּוּ

ἀνθρώπῳ δὲ ἐπετρέψατε λαλῆσαι τοιαῦτα ῥήματα

Attempts to translate H so as to suit the context strain the force of וְ, or fail to do justice to the order of the words. For example, the Revised Version renders “*For* he hath not,” etc.;



Budde says the meaning is: "His weapons can do *me* no harm for my weapons are different from yours," which would surely require **אלי** to precede **עך**, **לא כ**, instead of **ו** before **באמריכם**, and **יעך** instead of **עך**. Substantially Bickell seems to have recovered the correct text by reading **אעד כאלה** in place of **עך אלי**. As closer to H and involving merely the supposition of the loss of two letters through haplography and the corruption of **ה** into **י**, I propose **אעד כאלה**. But the evidence for the change is worth a little closer attention. This evidence consists of (a) parallelism, (b) the versions, primarily G.

a) *Parallelism*.—**מלין** and **אמרי[ם]** are parallel terms, and suggest that the parallelism of the entire lines was originally more complete than in the present text. But if this be so, the first person in **אשיבנו** suggests **אעד** instead of **עך**; and to the **כ** of **באמריכם** we may look for a parallel behind **אלי**, which we obtain by reading **כאלה**.

b) *Versions*.—S V omit the first *waw*, which may well be right, and S has **אעד=אח**. But it is G that calls for more careful attention. This is not so paraphrastic as it looks; for *ἀνθρῶπι δέ* is really a rendering of **לא-איש** in verse 13. In any case there pretty clearly correspond to **אלי מלין** in H the words *τοιαῦτα ρήματα* in G. It should follow then that G attests a reading **כאלה מלין**. The only reason for questioning this is that G in Job inserts *τοιαῦτα* at times where it certainly did not stand in H (see 15:4, 13; 33:16). On the other hand, in these cases it places *τοιαῦτα* after the noun. Since here it *precedes* the noun, as elsewhere where it corresponds to a **כאלה** actually in the Hebrew text (compare *τοιαῦτα πολλά*=**כאלה רבות** in 16:2), and since **אלי** of H is not otherwise represented in G, the reading **כאלה** seems reasonably secured. It is curious that Beer does not record it in Kittel's Bible, though he has noted it in his earlier work, for it is certainly a far better attested reading than some of those attributed to G in Kittel. I render the emended text to show the parallelism obtained in it:

I will not set forth such words as these,  
Nor will I answer him with your sayings.